guidelines for convergence of all watershed development programmes for development of Rainfed Areas through Watershed Management approach which address the issues of Soil and Water Conservation including drought mitigation and drought proofing of crops and livelihood of the farmers.

Rainfed farming

2275. SHRI SABIR ALI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the status of rainfed farming system;

(b) the schemes for rainfed farming; and

(c) in which parts of the country these programmes need to be implemented vigorously?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) Approximately 79.44 million hectare of land in the country is cultivated under rainfed conditions. There are many schemes supporting rainfed farming in the country, *viz*., National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA), Soil Conservation for Enhancing Productivity of Degraded lands in the Catchments of River Valley Projects and Flood Prone River (RVP and FPR), Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA), Reclamation and Development of Alkali and Acid Soils (RADAS). Other externally aided projects are also being implemented on watershed approach by the Ministry of Agriculture for development of rainfed and degraded lands through various soil and water conservation measures. At the end of second year of Eleventh Plan, about 20.46 million hectare area has been developed under these programmes with an expenditure of Rs. 10,964 crores.

The Ministry of Rural Development is also implementing area development programme namely Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP), Desert Development Programme (DDP) and Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP) on watershed basis for the development of wastelands/degraded lands/rainfed areas. Under the above schemes so far 45,062 projects have been sanctioned covering 32.31 million hectare. At the end of 2nd year of the Eleventh plan period Rs. 9253.70 crores has been released to the States for implementation of these programmes.

Rainfed area development programmes need to be implemented vigorously in the arid and semi arid regions of the country comprising areas in the states like Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir.

Government's policy on co-operative sector

2276. SHRI SABIR ALI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the recent past the co-operative sector has lost much of its sheen;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of Government's policy in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) It has been experienced that inspite of the quantitative growth, the cooperative sector is beset with several constraints related to resource availability, institutional inadequacies, erosion of the democratic content in management, poor infrastructure etc. Due to these constraints, the cooperative institutions generally are not in a position to avail optimum advantages of open and globalised economy and to contribute due share in national economy looking to their voluminous size and vast network spread over throughout the country. Some of basic reasons for such state of affairs of cooperatives have been; lack of members' awareness, lack of professional management, excessive Government controls and lack of appropriate legislative and policy framework etc.

(c) To address these issues, Government of India has enunciated a National Policy on Cooperatives to ensure autonomy, lasting viability of cooperatives and that they work as professionally and democratically managed institutions accountable to their members. Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002 has been enacted with effect from 19th August, 2002 which empowers the Multi-State Cooperative Societies to work as professionally and democratically managed bodies with active participation of members. It is envisaged that the Act of 2002 will provide a guiding legislative framework for reforms in State legislations.

Further, on the basis of the recommendations of the Vaidyanathan Committee, the Government has approved a Revival Package for Short Term Cooperative Credit Structure (STCCS). Revival Package envisages an outlay of Rs. 13,597 crore for recapitalisation of STCCS. So far, 25 States have signed the MOU with Government of India and NABARD. An amount of Rs. 6072.71 crore has been released by NABARD as Government of India share for recapitalization of 37,599 PACS in ten States, while the State Governments have released Rs. 608.13 crore as their share.

Under the Central Sector Scheme for Cooperative Education and Training, Government has been giving grant for implementing Cooperative Education and Training in the country. Government also implements its cooperative development programmes through National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC). The programmes/schemes being implemented through NCDC are (i) Integrated Cooperative Development Projects in selected districts (ii) assistance to cooperative marketing, processing and storage etc. programmes in cooperatively under-developed/least developed states/union territories, and (iii) share capital participation in growers'/weavers' cooperative spinning mills.

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2277. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state: